

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-18 are pending herein. New claim 18 depends from pending claim 1 and has been added to recite additional subject matter that is not disclosed or suggested by the applied prior art of record.

In paragraph 3 of the December 23, 2003 Office Action, claims 1-17 were rejected under §103(a) over Hsu in view of EP 943,942 (EP '942) (assigned to the same Assignee as the present application). The May 21, 2004 Request for Reconsideration set forth specific arguments explaining the reasons why the above rejection is erroneous. In the June 21, 2004 Advisory Action, the PTO provided a one sentence response stating that "the Applicant did not overcome the final rejection, the motivation to combine the references is provided by EP '942." This statement, however, is not responsive to any of the points discussed in the Request for Reconsideration, the entirety of which is incorporated herein by reference. For the convenience of the PTO, the following discussion summarizes the arguments asserted in the Request for Reconsideration. The PTO is respectfully requested to respond to each of the specific points discussed below.

Each of Hsu and EP '942 disclose an optical fiber array having a cover plate that has a narrower width than the lower substrate on which the cover plate is supported (e.g., see Fig. 2 of Hsu and Fig. 5 of EP '942). The PTO's position in the December 23, 2003 Office Action is that the sole motivation to combine Hsu and EP '942 would have been to provide the structure shown in Fig. 2 of Hsu with a cover plate that is smaller than the substrate, as shown in Fig. 5 of EP '942. Fig. 2 of Hsu, however, clearly shows that the width of glass plate 21 is already narrower than the width of the lower substrate. Based on the PTO's reasoning, the sole motivation for modifying Hsu's structure depends upon a feature (i.e., a narrower cover plate) shown in EP '942 *that is already used in Hsu's optical array structure in the same*

manner as in EP '942. It defies logic to rely upon a feature from a secondary reference (EP '942) that is already present, and arranged in the same manner (i.e., smaller cover plate/wider substrate), in a primary reference (Hsu) as the motivation for combining primary and secondary references. This rejection should be withdrawn for this reason alone.

EP '942 attributes improved adhesive bonding strength and reliability to the structure shown in EP '942 Fig. 5 (i.e., narrower cover plate/wider substrate) as compared to the structure shown in Fig. 6 of EP '942 (i.e., same width cover plate and substrate). There is, however, absolutely no evidence in this record that compares the adhesive bonding strength of the structure shown in EP '942 Fig.5 to the adhesive bonding strength attributable to the structure shown in Fig. 2 of Hsu. As such, upon reading EP '942 skilled artisans would have absolutely no reason to believe that the adhesive bonding strength of the structure shown in EP '942 Fig. 5 would be any greater than the adhesive bonding strength of the structure shown in Fig. 2 of Hsu. Any conclusion to the contrary is based purely on speculation, which certainly cannot form the basis for an obviousness rejection.

In view of all of the foregoing, reconsideration and withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection over Hsu in view of EP '942 are respectfully requested.

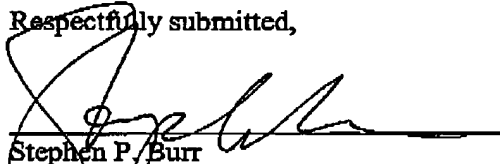
If the Examiner believes that contact with Applicants' attorney would be advantageous toward the disposition of this case, the Examiner is herein requested to call Applicants' attorney at the phone number noted below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1446.

July 21, 2004

Date

Respectfully submitted,


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